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INDIANS OF THE OLD COLONY; THEIR RELATION WITH AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SETTLEMENT OF THE AREA

A Paper Given at a Meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Boston, Mass., Dec. 26, 1953

By Maurice Robbins

For more than a century prior to the settlement of Plymouth, which came to be known as the "Old Colony", the aboriginal cultures of New England were in contact with the European cultures which were destined to replace them in the new world.

The relationships which develop between two dissimilar cultures when they are brought into contact are often difficult to understand and this is particularly true when one of these cultures happens to be that of one's ancestors. The causes which lie behind the observed reactions become apparent only when viewed against the background of culture totals. To reach a complete understanding of the relationships between the two peoples, one must be familiar not only with the content of their cultures in terms of traits, but one must grasp the essence of the cultures, that indefinable concept of the sum total of a culture which Dr. Benedict has called the genius of a culture, its configuration.

It is, of course, impossible within the limited scope of this paper to undertake such an exhaustive study; at best we can but call attention to some of the aspects of the relationship, attempting to select those of primary importance to the peoples involved.

Most of the contributions made by the Indians to the settlement of the Old Colony were those material traits that were a necessary attribute of successful adaptation to existence in the wilderness. Traits from the Indian agricultural complex, food gathering and hunting traits, were traits of survival, without which the English could not have established themselves in America. Political and social adjustments between the groups were a matter of little consequence in the early days of the contact, although these were to become the major problems of a later day.

The English who emigrated to southeastern New England were drawn from every class of society save royalty itself. The majority were yeomen and craftsmen of excellent standing in the communities from which they came. Some were well educated, in a Euopean sense, most were intelligent and capable individuals, all were inclined to be independent in thought and had a very definite purpose in coming to America. Their primary interest was undoubtedly to secure for themselves and their posterity economic freedom and a greater measure of security. They wanted to own the land upon which they lived, to be the masters of their destiny, and to worship God as they chose. With them they brought some servants and apprentices from the lower rungs of the social ladder, but most of these were ambitious individuals many of whom became substantial citizens of the Old Colony. There probably were some few who came in order to escape the consequences of non-conformity to the customs and the religious thought of the period. A clergyman or two perhaps, who had expressed himself a bit too freely, a political reformer to whom the restrictive philosophy of England was abhorrent, or a petty criminal fleeing the harsh justice of the times. Taken as a whole, however, the early settlers of New England constituted a good cross section of the English speaking people of the period, a fair number of well educated, substantial men, who were to become the leaders, political as well as theological, together with a much larger group of artisans and farmers who constituted the backbone of the movement. Unfortunately the experience and the education of these emigrants was limited to their own environment and, while it was to be of great use to them in some respects, it did not include a practical knowledge of the skills most necessary to pioneers. But they were resourceful, determined, and courageous men and proved themselves able, with some help from the Indians, to adapt themselves to this new way of life and to adjust themselves to the unfamiliar pattern demanded of them.

The most striking aspect of their social structure was its theocratic nature. All were supposed to be Christians but as such they were far from united in doctrine and practice. The controversies of a religious nature which rocked the early communities clutter up contemporary literature to such an extent as to make it difficult reading and serve to demonstrate complexities of thought which must have been much too intricate to be clearly understood by most of the people of that day. It would seem almost that they did not trust the God to whom they prayed. They stood in great awe of the scriptures and they were filled with an overwhelm-

ing fear of an evil being to whom they granted powers second only to those of God Himself. To them it seemed as if these two forces were always at war and that men were but pawns in this everlasting struggle.

Having but little knowledge or understanding of natural law, any effect, the cause of which was obscure to them, was considered to be supernatural. As the unknown could usually be presumed to be evil, any contact with it threw the average Englishman into a state of reasonless and abject terror. In this state of continuous mental conflict, his bodily ills, personal failures, and misfortunes became manifestations of the evil forces which were allied against him. The only remedy which he knew was to attempt to secure the favor and protection of his God by humble fasting, self condemnation, and earnest prayer.

In spite of the low spiritual estate in which he fancied himself to be, the Englishman looked out upon the world about him with an egotistical eye. As there was to him only one England, so there was only one world. The other planets which he saw in the evening sky were believed to revolve about the world as the center of the universe. Occasionally he identified some of these heavenly bodies with the evil forces which he so greatly feared and believed that they might exert some sinister force in the affairs of men. Like the Indians, some Englishmen wore charms and amulets, depending upon these to ward off some of the dangers with which they thought themselves surrounded. When sickness beset them they made use of weird concoctions, evil smelling and ill tasting draughts, which had little except psychological effect upon their mistreated bodies. By way of illustration let me quote this prescription from among those in the collection of Dr. Fuller of Plymouth: "Good for all sorts of ague. Let the patient's nails be pared and gather ye parings and tie around the neck of an eel in a tub of water, boil well." Or again from the notebook of Governor Winthrop: "For ye plague, Small Pox, or Feaver. In ye month of March take Toads, as many as you will, alive; put them into an earthen pott, so it be half full. Cover with an Iron plate, then overturn the pott, so the bottom be uppermost. Put charcoals about it and over it, and in the open ayre, not in a house. (A wise precaution if one must live in the house). Set it on the fire and let it burn out and extinguish itself. When it is cold take out the toads; and in an iron mortar pound them very well. Of this make a drayme, and let them sweat upon it in their beds, but let them not cover their heads, especially in Small Pox." It would seem that in their medical knowledge the English were but little advanced beyond their Indian neighbors, in fact they seemed to have learned much from them in this regard.

In their political acumen and organization and in material culture the English were far advanced in comparison to the Indians. Government and law were their fetish, religion their occupation, weapons and overwhelming numbers their eventual salvation.

The legal code of the Old Colony was a curious admixture of Mosaic law and English or Roman invention. The theologians were usually called upon to interpret the scriptural aspect of these laws in obscure instances and they came up with some tenuous applications indeed. In the early days of the colony there were not too many laws on the statute books; they had all that they needed in the Old Testament. The few laws that were enacted usually dealt with the purchase of lands and were intended to protect the Indians in such transactions. The important point to this discussion is the wholesome respect for law and for the government so created which existed in the minds of Englishmen. Political and military officials were endowed with an authority that was unquestioned and which existed independent of personal whims. The rights of the individual were fixed and jealously guarded by the courts. The most important aspect of this high regard for the law and for those who enforced it was the stability that this universal concept imparted to the government which enabled it to present a united front to enemies and insured a continuity of policy and an irresistibility in warfare unknown in Indian cultures.

Those European traits which were adaptable to this new life were extremely advantageous and the English made full use of them. The weapons of the English in particular, crude as they may seem to us, were terrible and deadly in the eyes of his stone age contemporaries. Possibly the impressiveness of this single trait engendered in the mind of the Indians a greatly magnified concept of the entire English culture pattern.

At the time of European contact, the Indians of the Old Colony possessed a culture somewhat advanced over that of their neighbors to the north. Socially they were divided into classes somewhat

similar to those to be found in English society. At the top of the Indian social ladder came what might be called a ruling class, those of royal blood from among whom came the sachems, the sub-sachems or councillors whom they called *"pnieses"*. These were the political leaders of the tribe. From this class also came the priesthood, *powahs* or *pow wows*, called "conjurors" by the English because of certain magical rites which they observed. The priests were also the medicine men and the orators of the tribe and as such wielded much political influence.

The second and by far the larger social group among the Indians were the common people or *sanops*. In this group were the warriors and their families and in them was vested the ownership of the tribal lands. In a sense the real political power rested in this group as it was upon their approval that political power could be exercised.

Still a third group has been recognized, made up of outsiders, wanderers who attached themselves to the tribe for one reason or another. These together with their descendants had few rights within the tribal organization beyond protection from common enemies.

The office of sachem seems to have been an hereditary one, descent being reckoned in the male line if possible. The oldest son of a sachem usually succeeded him in office, sometimes before his death should advancing age make it advisable to replace him. There is a hint however, that the son must have had to qualify by demonstrating a certain amount of ability and force of character else he did not for long retain the loyalty of his subjects. The presence of "squa-sachems" among some historical groups indicates that whenever the male line of hereditary descent was broken, the distaff side of the royal family could inherit the office. One custom in this connection which is an excellent example of political wisdom is the dual sachemship. As a newly raised sachem was apt to be young and inexperienced, perhaps inclined to impetuous and ill considered action, a second and older person, usually an uncle or other close relative, was sometimes associated with him in the sachemship. It is not clear that this was always the case nor does it appear for how long a period the dual office remained in effect. In this ingenious manner the tribe insured itself against rash policies and hastily conceived action. We have historical mention of several instances of dual sachemship. Dermer speaks of two kings of Pokonoket who came to visit him at Nemasket, in this instance the famous Ousamequin and his uncle Omkompoin. Again we are told by Roger Williams that Minitonomah and his nephew Canonicus were associated in the chief sachemship of the Narragansetts.

The English titles of King or Queen which were often applied to Indian leaders suggest attributes which were foreign to Indian concept. Sachems exercised authority within the bounds of custom or unwritten tribal law. They could do *errende* or that which is right with the full approbation of their people, but should a sachem attempt to alter custom or disregard the wishes of his people, his commands would be ignored and his authority flouted. The advice of the council was sought by the sachems in all matters of importance and in carrying out the considered opinion of this court the sachem possessed despotic powers, even in the matter of life or death. Tribute was paid to the sachems in the form of food and other commodities and it has been said that the hides of all deer killed while in the water belonged to them.

The concept of the Indians with regard to the ownership of tribal lands was of the utmost importance in the relationship between them and the English. Roger Williams writes that the Indians "were very exact and punctual in the bounds of their lands, belonging to this or that Prince or People (even to a River, Brook), etc. and I have known them to make bargain and sale among themselves for a small quantity of ground." There is also an indication of some sort of concept of individual ownership or control apart from tribal possession in the several witnessed despositions which may be found in the records of the English Courts. In these, various Indians testified as to the ownership of lands about to be sold, to the effect that the lands were known by them to have belonged to a given person "who had it from his father". However, despite this contemporary evidence, it is altogether possible that these instances are but the results of English suggestion and may have no bearing upon the concepts of prehistoric times. Even Williams injects an element of doubt into his statement as quoted above when he says "Prince or People".

The mute evidence of the deeds which have come down to us suggests that after the concept of selling land was introduced, the Indians considered the title as being vested in the tribe as a political entity

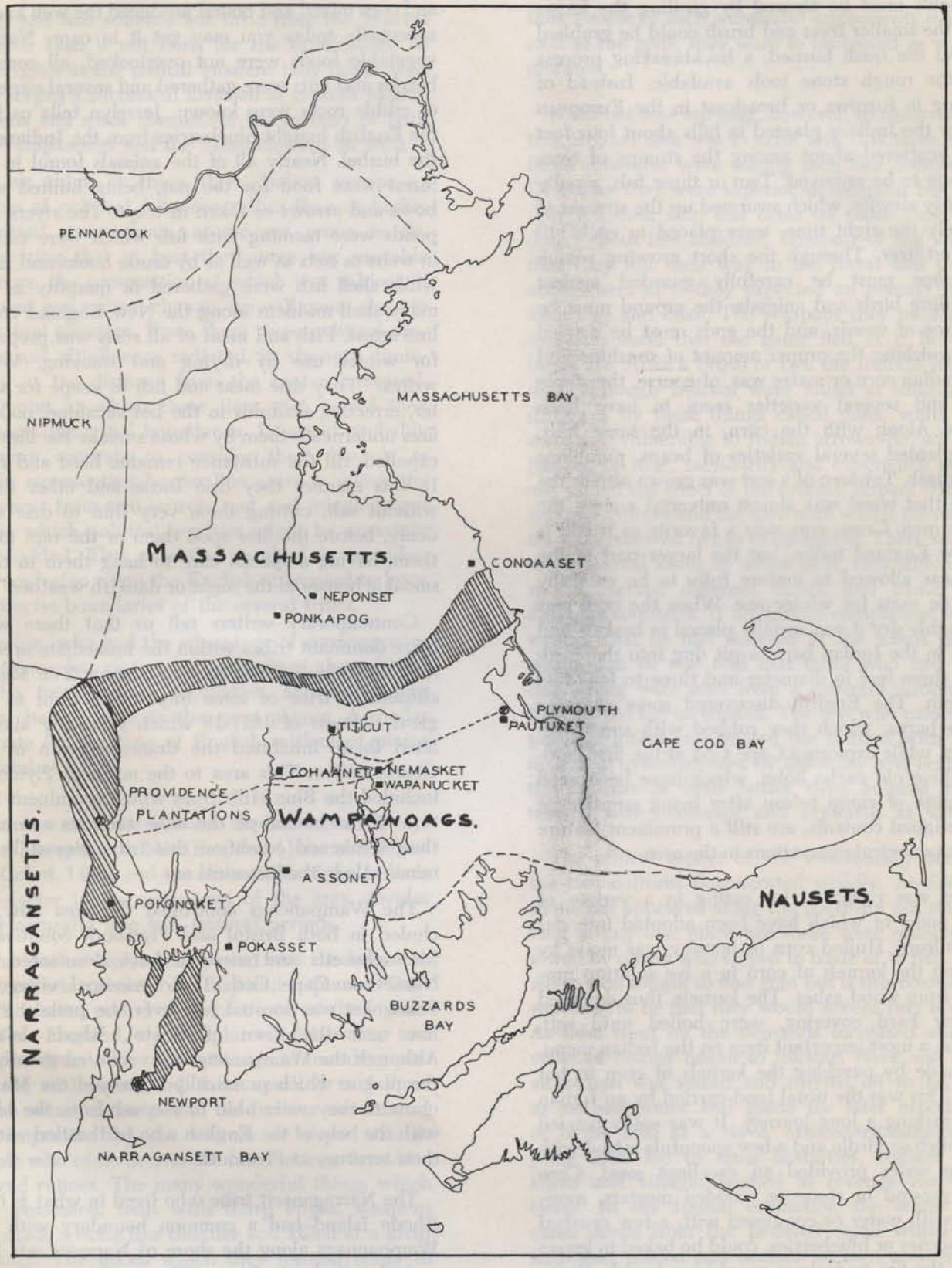
and in a majority of the deeds given by them the signature is that of the sachem, usually accompanied by those of some of his chief councillors or prominent warriors. There is evidence that certain hunting ranges were considered the property of specific family groups and that cleared land belonged, at least temporarily, to those who had done the work thereon.

When the English broached the question of ownership in order that they might obtain what they considered a valid title it became necessary to explain the idea to the Indians. Either due to language difficulties or because the English assumed that all people must have a concept similar to their own, they failed to make clear to the Indians the precise meaning of selling their lands. It was not until a much later time that the Indians finally came to comprehend the matter fully but it was then much too late to make any difference.

The Indians seem to have thought that the sale of a tract of land was the transfer of an abstract commodity that is best explained by calling it a co-occupancy right. Such an idea is logical when one considers the type of use which an Indian made of land. Under this concept a given tract of land could be sold to as many people as it might be expected to accomodate or support in the economy to which the Indian was adjusted. One could not expect the Indians to foresee that this land would eventually be stripped of its forest cover almost entirely and fenced off into orderly farm lands. "No Trespass" signs had never appeared in New England; the idea was so foreign to Indian concept that it simply did not occur to them at all. When an Indian sachem affixed his signature to a deed which he could not read he did not realize that he was giving an absolute title which could bar him and his people from further use of the tract described if the new owner chose to exercise his right. The value given in exchange for land and often noted in these early deeds is mute evidence that the Indians thought they were selling something far less precious than the land itself. So long as the English population was small in comparison to their land holdings there was no attempt to occupy all of the land. In fact the English occupation in the early days was not too different from that of the Indians. Small areas were cleared for farming but the forests were not destroyed and there was still plenty of cover for the game which both races hunted. This practice fostered the co-occupancy concept which had been assumed by the Indian and lulled him into a false security which was an excellent state of mind as far as the land hungry settler was concerned.

We have little information concerning the religious traits of the New England Indians. Those who could have furnished this data did not seem to think that the Indians had a religion worth learning about. What little has come down to us indicates that the Indians believed in a multitude of good and bad spirits presided over by a few superdeities. All these supernatural beings possessed the power to influence the fortunes of men. In turn the spirits could be influenced by ritual acts, placated by sacrifice and sometimes frightened by threats. If spirits proved particularly stubborn or malignant the conjuror might be persuaded to use his more professional approach on one's behalf. Bodily ills which were not explainable by natural events were certainly the work of supernatural influence and could only be cured by placating the spirit who was causing the mischief. One must not assume, however, that the Indians had no practical knowledge of the healing art. Their knowledge of the medicinal properties of roots and herbs found in the forest and along the marshy streams was remarkable and the English learned much from them in this regard. Undoubtedly a certain amount of chicanery was practised by the Medicine men; magic and religion went hand and hand in those days. To the Indians, animate and inanimate objects, even such abstract forces as the wind and the storm, possessed that essence of life that we call the soul. As intelligent beings all these must be treated with courtesy and respect lest they become incensed and work harm upon the offender.

The economy of the Old Colony Indians at the time of contact was fairly stable. At a remote time agriculture had been introduced into the area and the Indians had become well adjusted to a semi-sedentary sort of life. It was from this agricultural complex that the first and probably the most important contributions were made to the English settlement of the area. Indian agricultural traits were very different than those to which the English were accustomed, but they were perfectly adapted to the environment and it was necessary for the English to adopt them, at least temporarily, if they were to become successful farmers here in America. When the leaves of the white oak tree were the size of a field mouse's ear the time of planting had come.


PENNACOOK
NIPMUCK
MASSACHUSETTS BAY
MASSACHUSETTS.
CONOAASET
NEPONSET
PONKAPOG
PLYMOUTH
PAUTUXET
TITICUT
CAPE COD BAY
COHANNET
NEMASKET
WAPANUCKET
PROVIDENCE
PLANTATIONS
WAMPANOAGS.
NARRAGANSETTS.
ASSONET
NAUSETS.
POKANOKET
POKASSET
BUZZARDS
BAY
NEWPORT
NARRAGANSETT BAY

The fields must be cleared by girdling the larger trees; the smaller trees and brush could be grubbed out and the trash burned, a backbreaking process with the rough stone tools available. Instead of planting in furrows or broadcast in the European manner the Indians planted in hills about four feet apart, scattered about among the stumps of trees too large to be removed. Two or three fish, usually the lowly alewife, which swarmed up the streams at precisely the right time, were placed in each hill as a fertilizer. Through the short growing season the crops must be carefully guarded against marauding birds and animals, the ground must be kept free of weeds, and the gods must be cajoled into furnishing the proper amount of sunshine and rain. Indian corn or maize was, of course, the staple crop, and several varieties seem to have been known. Along with the corn, in the same hills, were planted several varieties of beans, pumpkins and squash. Tobacco of a sort was grown also as the use of that weed was almost universal among the Indian men. Green corn was a favorite as it still is in New England today, but the larger part of the crop was allowed to mature fully to be carefully dried on mats for winter use. When the corn was thoroughly dry it was usually placed in baskets and stored in the Indian barn, a pit dug into the earth about three feet in diameter and three to four feet in depth. The English discovered some of these Indian barns, which they robbed with some misgivings, while exploring Cape Cod at the first landing. These old cache holes, which have been used to dispose of camp refuse after being emptied of their original contents, are still a prominent feature of archaeological excavations in the area.

Corn was prepared for eating in a variety of ways, many of which have been adopted into our own culture. Hulled corn or hominy was made by steeping the kernels of corn in a lye solution prepared from wood ashes. The kernels, thus denuded of their hard covering, were boiled until soft. Nokake, a most important item on the Indian menu, was made by parching the kernels of corn in hot ashes. This was the usual food carried by an Indian when making a long journey. It was easily carried in a pouch or girdle and a few spoonfuls mixed with a little water provided an excellent meal. Corn meal, ground in stone or wooden mortars, moistened with water or combined with a few crushed strawberries or blueberries, could be baked in leaves before the fire to make a nourishing bread. Beans and corn mixed and boiled produced the well known succotash; today you may get it in cans. Natural vegetable foods were not overlooked, all sorts of berries and nuts were gathered and several varieties of edible roots were known. Josselyn tells us that the English bought blueberries from the Indians by the bushel. Nearly all of the animals found in the forest were food for the pot, being hunted with bows and arrows or taken in traps. The rivers and ponds were teeming with fish which were caught in weirs or nets as well as by crude hooks and lines, while shell fish were gathered in quantity as the many shell middens along the New England coastline attest. Fish and meat of all sorts was prepared for winter use by drying and smoking. Wood writes: "They drie meat and fish to keepe for winter, erecting scaffolds in the hot sunshine, making fires underneath them by whose smoake the flies are expelled, till the substance remaine hard and drie. In this manner they drie Basse and other fishes without salt, cutting them very thin to drie suddenly, before the flies spoil them or the rain moist them, having a special care to hang them in their smoakie houses in the night or dankish weather."

Contemporary writers tell us that there were three dominant tribes within the immediate area of the Old Colony at the time of contact. The Massachusetts, a tribe of some importance prior to the great sickness of 1617-18 which so nearly annihilated them, inhabited the drainage basin of the Charles River. This area to the north of Plymouth included the Blue Hills from which prominent feature of the landscape the tribe took its name. In their weakened condition this tribe played but a minor role in the historical era.

The Wampanoags controlled the area now included in both Bristol and Plymouth counties of Massachusetts and seem to have dominated the Nauset on Cape Cod. Their principal village of Pokonoket was located just over the present state line near the town of Bristol, Rhode Island. Although the Wampanoags also suffered greatly in the plague which practically destroyed the Massachusetts they were able to recover from the blow with the help of the English who had settled within their territory at Plymouth.

The Narragansett tribe who lived in what is now Rhode Island had a common boundary with the Wampanoags along the shore of Narragansett Bay and the Seekonk River. They were a powerful

group and had suffered but little from the general sickness. Had it not been for the interference of the English at the critical moment they might well have staged a successful invasion of eastern Massachusetts and made themselves the masters of both the Wampanoags and the Massachusetts in 1620.

If we think of these three Indian groups as sources of political influence rather than as highly organized governments, as we are prone to do, recognizing that at best they were but unstable alliances, the composition of which was subject to frequent and radical change, we will come close to the actual situation. From these three political centers a sort of influence radiated, its strength diminishing as the distance from the center increased. The point at which these lines met would then delineate the tribal boundaries. It would probably be more accurate to consider these bounds as bands, representing border line areas in which the influences from two sources met and mingled, and within which political loyalties might be uncertain and divided. This condition resulted in considerable confusion when the English attempted to learn the precise boundaries of the several tribes.

Gookin, who had the advantage of contemporary experience, has given us an estimate of about 30,000 as the total Indian population of southeastern Massachusetts prior to the great plague. A similar estimate for the time of English settlement places the total at 7,000.

The two centuries between the first recorded voyage of Europeans to New England (John and Sebastian Cabot, 1498) and the elimination of the Indians as a factor in the settlement of the area, divides itself naturally into two general periods.

The first or exploration period was the longer in time, covering about a century and a quarter. During this initial period of contact most of the visitors to New England were explorers, fishermen, and traders; there were a few attempts at founding permanent settlements and these resulted in failure. At the outset of this period the Indians were naturally impressed by the culture of these strange people who came in over the horizon in great white winged canoes. The many wonderful things which they possessed, tools with sharp edges, weapons that made a noise like thunder and killed at a great distance. The goods which they seemed ready to trade at ridiculous prices were an irresistable attraction. People of such wonderful attainments must be akin to the gods; they were to be feared as well as placated.

It did not take too long, however, to discover that this original idea was in error and that these white faced creatures were simply men like themselves. Of course they were superior in weapons but once they left their ship and came on shore they wandered about like children. Ignorant of the wilderness they lost their way in the forest and peered about them as if they expected an enemy behind each tree and bush. The weapons they used made so much noise that the game fled as if before a forest fire. After a brush or two the Indians learned that, although Indians were killed at unheard of distances by these things called guns, white men were also vulnerable to Indian arrows. So, with the passing of time, familiarity and experience gradually dulled the effect of the original impact with the superior culture and the awe with which the explorers were received began to disappear. There seemed to be several kinds of white men, they differed in speech, served different chiefs, and came from different countries. If an Indian complained about wrongs that he had suffered at the hands of the white man he was told that those who had done this wrong were men from a different nation and they should not be trusted. The few who came with peaceful intent and treated the Indians with kindness were overshadowed by the many who regarded the Indians as little better than animals to be treated with contempt and exploited at will.

The ethical aspect of the relationship between the two cultures degenerated rapidly. At first the ships that appeared along the coast did not stay too long at any one place but these were quickly followed by others who stayed to trade or to fish. Most white men sought to find gold but if this commodity were not to be had they would accept furs instead. As time went on the demands increased and the value of beaver began to decline. Here and there an Indian was seized and carried off to be used as an interpreter and guide for later expeditions or to be sold as a slave. Misunderstandings and petty theft led to open hostilities, Indians were killed and villages burned in revenge for white losses. In the Indian estimation the white gods came down from the pedestal upon which they had been placed and became as men and inferior sort of men at that. The word went out among the

tribes, even to inland tribes who had never seen a white man, that they were not to be trusted, they spoke with "crooked tongues" and would steal and murder without provocation.

Experience with Englishmen did nothing to inspire confidence. Captain John Smith appeared on the coast of New England sometime in 1614 with a number of ships. One of these ships under the command of Thomas Hunt was left to complete a cargo of furs while Smith who was much more interested in exploring and drawing maps, continued the voyage. The collection of furs proved much too slow to satisfy Captain Hunt so he proceeded to entice a number of Indians on board his ship on the pretence of trading. Once aboard they were confined below while the ship sailed off for Spain where there was an excellent market for slaves. His human cargo being disposed of to advantage Hunt returned to England with a neat profit for his owners. This infamous exploit was known to all of the southern New England tribes and did nothing to inculcate any great love for Englishmen in that area.

However, even as they were creating distrust and enmity among the natives of New England the explorers and traders were laying the foundations for a permanent settlement of the area. The information which they brought back to the old world was seized upon avidly. Descriptions of the natives and their strange customs, maps of this new country, often highly imaginary, and their tales of high adventure were published and widely read in England. A large number of Englishmen became greatly interested in America. Among them were those who were to organize and finance attempts at permanent colonization. It is fortunate that Smith, who would have made an attempt at settlement in 1615 had he been able to interest sufficient capital, did not do so. The enmity of the New England Indians was so great and their power of defense so formidable that nothing less than the armed strength of Britain's navy could have established a bridgehead there.

However, the closing years of the exploration period were to witness a series of events in New England that were to alter the situation radically in favor of the white man. These events must receive our attention in order that we may arrive at a correct understanding of the reasons for the initial success of the Plymouth settlement.

Gookin, who obtained much of his information at first hand, tells us that about the year 1615, a predatory Indian group, whose lands lay to the north of Massachusetts, initiated a series of raids upon the scattered villages of the Massachusetts and Wampanoags. The Old Colony Indians called these raiders the Tarratines whom Speck identifies as probably Penobscot. Sweeping down from the north in raid after raid, especially just after the harvest time when there was much booty to be obtained, these savage warriors made life miserable for their victims. The exact extent of their depredations is not known but the Wampanoags and Massachusetts were considerably weakened, probably as much by the loss of their winter stores of food as by their losses in men killed. The Narragansetts, by reason of their remote location and the protection afforded by the intervening villages of the Wampanoag and Massachusetts, seem to have been exempt from these troubles. Bradford, in describing a trading voyage undertaken in the fall of 1621, says that the Indians about Massachusetts Bay were even then fearful lest the Tarratines come again and take away their winter's supply of corn and kill their people.

A still more sanguine event was the extraordinary sickness which swept the country of the Massachusetts and Wampanoags on the heels of the Tarratine raids. Wars they understood and against them they could take some measure of protection, but against this terrible sickness they were defenseless. Thousands of Indians died; so rapidly did the contagion spread and so fatal was its course that the living were unable to care for the sick or bury the dead. Those who were able, fled from their villages into the forest in the dead of a New England winter, leaving behind them food and shelter. Those who thus escaped infection fell even more quickly before the ravages of cold and hunger. The Patuxets, whose village had stood where Plymouth was destined to be built, perished to a man in the calamity. The Massachusetts and Wampanoags, once powerful tribes, were further reduced to a mere shadow of their former strength, but their hereditary enemies to the west, the fortunate Narragansetts were again passed by, and suffered but little in this second great disaster.

Taking immediate advantage of the weakened condition of the Wampanoags, the Narragansetts, under their sachem Miantonomo, began to invade the country across Narragansett Bay. The Wampanoag warriors did what they could in defence of their homeland but proved no match for their pow-

erful adversaries. Ousamequin later told his friend Roger Williams how he was forced to attend the savage court of the Narragansetts and to acknowledge himself and his lands as subject to that tribe. He added, however, that his people had not been subdued by war alone, but that the terrible plague and the Tarratine raids had so weakened them that a successful defence could not be maintained. Had it not been for the timely arrival of the English at Plymouth to become the allies of the Wampanoags the Narragansetts might well have become the Indian rulers of all southeastern Massachusetts.

While these changes in political grouping and military strength were taking place in the Old Colony area the forces of invasion were gathering in England. The second phase of the contact period was about to open.

The merchant adventurers of London who sponsored and financed the Plymouth venture, were composed of astute and hard headed business men. To them the foundation of the colony was purely a business venture from which they intended to reap a profit. Their plans were laid accordingly. An ample opportunity to study the history of previous attempts had been afforded them and they were well aware of the difficulties which had arisen. The maps of explorers, particularly those of Captain John Smith, were available and these with Smith's glowing descriptions of the country about Plymouth on Massachusetts Bay doubtless influenced their decision to make an attempt in that general vicinity.

Economic and political conditions in England had prepared a fertile field in which to recruit candidates for migration to the new world about which, it seemed, everyone was talking. As the tales passed from mouth to mouth the advantages to be found in this new country were magnified out of all true proportion. The climate was said to be the most healthful in all the world for Englishmen, the soil was unbelieveably fertile, and, most wonderful of all, it was said that there one might acquire land in his own right. What English yeoman, bearing the backbreaking burden of taxes and rent, did not yearn for a farm of his very own, land which he could work not only himself but which he could pass on to his sons. Then too, one was said to have freedom of thought in America; the long arm of the church of England could not quite reach across the broad Atlantic. Nothing was said about the rigors of life in the wilderness thousands of miles away from old England. Homesickness, privations, hunger, sickness, and death were left out of the sales talks. The merchant adventurers were aware, however, that disillusionment lay in wait, that once their immigrants arrived in America they would find these problems. If the way back were left open their ship might return with a full passenger list. This had happened before and means must be found to avoid it in this instance.

Casting about for some solution to this problem the merchant adventurers sought to interest a group of people in their venture who had a reason for wishing to leave behind them the comparative comfort and security of England. That reason must be greater than a mere desire for economic improvement. The Separatists, who were then living in Holland, seemed to be just the sort of people they were looking for. These Separatists themselves had said "We are well weaned from ye delicate milke of our mother countrie, and enured to the difficulties of a strange and hard land.—It is not with us as with other men whom small things can discourage, or small discontentments cause to wish themselves at home again". Around this hard core of religious outcasts could be built a colony of determined pioneers. Among them were men of education who would make excellent leaders and men of their religious nature could be depended upon to abide by their obligations.

After a rather trying period of negotiation, which seemed at several stages about to break down, the arrangements were completed. The people from Holland, who had taken to calling themselves "Pilgrims", accepted the offer of transportation and supplies in return for seven years of hard labor, after which they were to become full partners with the merchant adventurers. Only a portion of the company which finally set sail on the immortal Mayflower, however, were from the Separatist group. To them had been added a goodly number of outsiders who were to furnish necessary skills not available within the Pilgrim group. First of all there was Myles Standish, the military expert of the expedition, an experienced and able soldier upon whose broad shoulders was to rest the defence of the colony. Care of the physical man was entrusted to the good Doctor Fuller. John Alden was aboard a cooper who was to make the casks in which fish and furs might be shipped home; and there were carpenters to build houses and ships for trade and fishing. The Pilgrims were to be the men of sub-

stance who were to insure the permanence and stability of the colony while the skill and brawn to insure the profit was to be provided by the non-separatist element. The planning was good and despite the initial shock of adjustment was to pay off in later years.

There has been much discussion of the intentions and the fore-knowledge of the Pilgrims and the merchant adventurers. Was this voyage of the Mayflower planned to terminate in Virginia or New England? It may well be that they were aware of the conditions to be expected in New England at the moment, possibly they had heard of the terrible plague which had visited the Indians there and knew that the country was nearly depopulated. If so their information could not have been too specific; Bradford's story of the initial landing on Cape Cod and the desperate search in terrible weather for a suitable place at which to settle and the change discovery of Plymouth harbor, does not indicate a precise knowledge of conditions. Be that as it may, either excellent planning or extremely good fortune directed the Pilgrims to the one spot in all New England at which a landing could be effected and a settlement started without immediate opposition.

The departure of the Mayflower from England was so long delayed by petty bickering, and the voyage so difficult, that she arrived at her destination at a most inopportune time of year. Of course, some stores had been provided but these were scanty. There were many mouths to feed and the Mayflower's crew must have sufficient for their return voyage. There could be no planting until spring and no harvest until another fall. Fortunately a small amount of Indian corn which had been found during the explorations on Cape Cod had been seized in spite of objection on the part of some. It soon became apparent, however, that despite all of the careful planning, the company was in for a difficult time. Old Indian corn fields surrounded the site which had been selected for their village but they were already frozen hard and no vestige of a former crop remained. There was food in the sea before them and in the forest at their back, but in their sick and weakened condition it was difficult for them to procure it in sufficient quantity. The story of that first long winter of privation is too well known to need repeating here. It was a time of sickness, starvation, and death. Had these people been of less sturdy stock, had it not been for the separatist group who had rather die than return, the Mayflower might well have carried them all back to England long before spring.

The coming of the new year (March 1621) found the little settlement at Plymouth in desperate straights. The temporary structures which had served them throughout the winter must be replaced with more durable houses. A fort must be built and the heavy cannon carried ashore from the Mayflower and up the hill to arm it. Fields must be prepared and corn planted so that they might not face another winter with an empty store house. Yet there were scarcely twenty able men left to perform all these formidable tasks. The fact that they had not as yet established contact with the Indians also worried the leaders. That Indians were nearby was unquestioned, they had meen seen occasionally skulking in the woods about the settlement, men working in the woods had lost some of their tools, but all attempts to approach them had resulted in hasty flight. Was this because of fear or was it a sign of hostility? About the middle of March this dilemma resolved itself. One day when they least expected company a tall and brilliantly painted warrior stalked unceremoniously into the village, bade them welcome in English, and demanded beer. From this Indian, who called himself Samoset, they learned something about the Indians upon whose territory they had established their settlement. It seems that Samoset was quite familiar with Englishmen; he could speak the language to some extent, and was quite ready to make his home at Plymouth. Having feared the Indians, the English were now to find themselves embarrassed by their friendliness and their appetites. Convinced by the friendly reception of Samoset and Tisquantum, the great sachem of the Wampanoags, Ousamequin (Massasoit) allowed himself to be persuaded to pay an official visit to the settlement where he was received with the respect and honors due the head of a friendly state. At this period of contact the English accorded the Indians recognition as a sovereign people, a state with which treaties could be made and ambassadors exchanged. Two Wampanoags were left at Plymouth to serve as the representatives of the Sachem and it was through these two individuals that the most vital contributions of the Indians to the settlement of the Old Colony were made.

Tisquantum or Squanto is the better known of the two, probably because of his background which

prepared him to play the role so well. The most useful of Squanto's abilities at first was his excellent command of the English language and his familiarity with English customs. Squanto had been born at Plymouth, when it was known as Patuxet; it was his home town. About 1605 he had been taken to England by Captain George Weymouth; after a short stay he had returned in the company of the famous Captain John Smith. Having barely landed on his native shore he had the misfortune to be one of the twenty odd Patuxets seized by Captain Hunt to be sold as a slave in Spain. There he fell into the hands of some friars who treated him well and attempted to convert him to Christianity. Somehow Squanto managed to escape from captivity and to get himself to England. After another sojourn there he again returned to America in the company of Captain Thomas Dermer. Coming ashore with high hope of being again reunited with his family he found that in his absence the entire village had been wiped out in the terrible plague which had raged while he was in England. Homeless he had taken up his residence at the village of Pokonoket where the great sachem of the Wampanoags lived.

His companion at Plymouth was an Indian named Hobomuck, who seems to have been a person of some importance among his own people. Hobomuck did not have quite the qualifications nor the abilities of Squanto. Bradford does not bother to tell us what happened to him after the death of Squanto a few short months later.

Without the help of these two natives at this most critical period in the founding of the settlement the Plymouth venture might still have ended in failure. Under the tutelage of Squanto and Hobomuck the English learned many of the traits of Indian culture which they most needed to insure survival in the wilderness. They were shown where the fishing and hunting were the best, what natural foods could be found and how to prepare and eat them. Probably the first clam bake was made under the instruction of these two Indians. They also learned about using the alewives, which streamed into Town Brook in the spawning season, as a fertilizer, placing a fish or two in each hill of Indian corn, else, as Squanto told them, "all would come to naught in these old fields". From them also they learned of the strength or weakness of the neighboring tribes; the hitherto unknown country between Plymouth and Pokonoket and the area about the Bay was explored with Squanto and Hobomuck as guides and interpreters. The direct contributions made by these two Indians together with the friendliness of the great Wampanoag sachem were the factors which spelled success for the settlement at Plymouth. From the English viewpoint all this must have seemed most providential. Almost overnight their fears had disappeared. The Indians were not only friendly but seemed willing to assist them in procuring food and establishing trade; they seemed to bear them no resentment for having invaded their domain, and were ready to sell land.

Ousamequin, the Wampanoag sachem, was not only a valiant warrior but, it seems, was an able statesman. Grasping the opportunity of the proffered friendship, he and his councillors traveled over the Rhode Island Path to Plymouth and there, on March 22, 1621, they concluded an offensive-defensive alliance with the English. This action was, of course, tantamount to renouncing his submission to the Narragansetts. After a few days of feasting and celebration he headed back again to Pokonoket, once more a free man, sachem of an independent people, unaware that he was caught in a friendly embrace that was to prove far more fatal to his people than submission to the Narragansetts would ever have been.

At Plymouth the settlers, very conscious of the fact that the Indians, by mere weight of numbers, could have more than overcome their superiority in arms, were delighted at this peaceful solution to their problem. While at Pokonoket, a scant fifty miles to the west, Ousamequin thanked whatever Gods he knew for bringing the English to his country. Such an ally, with his thunder producing guns, more than replaced his lost warriors and enabled him to throw off the hateful yoke that his ancient enemies had so recently forced upon him. Over in Rhode Island, the Narragansett sachems watched with calculating eyes, while to the north the cautious Massachusetts bided their time, ready to join the winner.

The angry Narragansetts, unwilling to allow themselves to be so easily cheated of their victory, looked about them for some means of testing the value of this Wampanoag-English alliance and found it in the person of a discontented Wampanoag sub-sachem, Caunbitant. This sachem was not too impressed by the English, at least for the moment, and seems to have preferred to consort with people

of his own race. He undertook to stir up a bit of trouble for Ousamequin. As his first act of sabotage he seized upon the person of Squanto, whom he called "the tongue of the English". Informed of this overt act by Hobomuck, the doughty little captain of Plymouth, Myles Standish, instantly rushed to Nemasket where Squanto was said to be held prisoner. Caunbitant, greatly alarmed by this sudden and violent reaction, hastily released Squanto unharmed, and fled into the swamps of the Massachusetts domain. Here he made contact with Chickatabut, and these two, after many solemn councils and much discussion of the problem, went to Plymouth in September 1621 and submitted themselves as subjects of King James.

Without waiting to learn the outcome of Caunbitant's action at Nemasket, the Narragansetts struck directly at Ousamequin and succeeded in taking him prisoner. When this disturbing news reached Plymouth, Standish again prepared to take the field and envoys were dispatched to demand the immediate release of their Indian ally. Canonicus, disconcerted by such decisive and instant action, and by now possibly aware of the plight of Caunbitant, complied with the English ultimatum and released the Wampanoag sachem.

There were two parties among the Narragansetts; one headed by the aging Canonicus, desired peace, while the other, under the sway of the young and impetuous Miantonomo were determined to maintain their power over the Wampanoags and Massachusetts even though it might mean a war with the English. One can imagine the councils held by the disappointed Narragansetts during the winter of 1621-22. Fiery speeches by the young and spirited followers of Miantonomo, cautious and conciliatory advice from the older sachems. Probably the medicine men of the tribe were consulted and their auguries considered while the drums throbbed and the fires burned red. In February the war party dispatched a messenger to bear a challenge to Plymouth in the form of a snake skin stuffed with arrows and received in return the same skin packed full of powder and lead. Canonicus refused to receive this ominous reply and by this refusal renounced his control over the Indians to the east and the north. Again a strong English bluff had won.

The uneasy peace between the Wampanoags and the Narragansetts lasted until 1632, a fatal delay which allowed the Wampanoags to recoup their earlier losses and the English strength to double. In April of that year the Narragansett warriors again crossed the bay and attacked their ancient enemies at Pokonoket. But this time there were Englishmen living there and, while the Indians quickly fled toward Plymouth, these resolutely defended themselves. Canonicus took the field this time himself and called for reinforcements, preparing to settle the issue by force of arms. Standish, as usual rushed to the danger spot with a hastily assembled army. For a while it looked as if a test of English strength was about to begin. But the Narragansetts had other enemies in their rear. The Pequots also saw what they thought was an opportunity and began to invade Narragansett territory from the west while the warriors of Canonicus were busy on their eastern frontier. Canonicus was forced to withdraw his invading forces instantly and move to protect his rear. Once again the Wampanoags had been rescued by their friends from Plymouth. The war between the Pequots and the Narragansetts dragged on for nearly three years before the Pequots were finally expelled from Narragansett territory. By this time the English were firmly established, not only at Plymouth but at the Bay and in Rhode Island itself, at Newport. There was no longer any question of Wampanoag independence from the Narragansetts. But what does political independence mean to a people if in the gaining of it they lose their identity in the very ally that made the victory possible. While the country of the Wampanoags was being preserved from their Indian enemies it was slowly being consumed by sales and grants to the English.

A large part of the story of the relationships between the English settlers in the Old Colony and the Indians they found in the area depended in a large measure upon the adjustment of their varying concepts and in particular the concepts having to do with the ownership and transfer of land. This problem together with the growing arrogance of the English toward their Indian allies was the basis of their ultimate disagreement and the destruction of the Indians which followed.

A study of the treaty which was concluded between the Wampanoags and the Plymouth government in 1621 does not reveal any distinct purchase of lands by the English. But the following quotation from Home's Annals suggests that the sachem Ousamequin did give them a definite tract

of land. "The New Plimouth associates, by the favor of Almighty God, began a colony in New England, at a place called by the natives Apaum, alias Patuxet, all the lands being void of inhabitants, we the said John Carver, William Bradford, Edward Winslow, Isaac Allerton, and the rest of our associates entering into a league of peace with Massasoit, since called Woosamequin, Prince or Sachem of these parts; he, the said Massasoit freely gave them all the lands adjacent to them, and their heirs forever."

The governing power at Plymouth was vested in the Governor in the early days of the colony but it was customary for him to call into council the several elders of the church whenever a matter of moment was to be decided. In 1625 five Assistants were chosen and in 1637 this number was increased to seven. The Governor with these Assistants constituted the General Court until such time as additional townships within the colony were created, whereupon they too were empowered to send delegates to the General Court. This General Court held both judiciary and legislative rights and among these was the authority to grant the right to purchase land from the Indians. In Virginia, the Governor and his council, as the representatives of the Crown, made a tract of land over to an individual for life, the individual being required to pay a quitrent; the rights of the aboriginal owners being ignored in this process. In Maryland and the Carolinas, the same procedure took place but with this important difference, that a grant was made not by the Crown but by the Proprietors. In New England grants were made by the General Court to a group of proprietors and not to an individual except in the case of some few, called the "early comers" who were deemed to have certain rights not applicable to later colonists. It was as a proprietor that an individual obtained property rights. Nor was this proprietory claim a mere technicality similar to the doctrine that the soil belongs to the Crown and that all estates in land are derived from that source. The New England Township was a landholder, using its position for the corporate good, and watching with jealous eye over the origin and the extension of individual rights. At the same time the General Court did not abandon completely its rights upon granting land to a proprietary group. It withheld a sort of sovereign interest designed to protect the common good and occasionally the Court made use of this retained right.

Gradually this New England system developed into a form greatly resembling the English manor system. Part of the land was granted in lots, a part was left in pasture as a joint possession of the people of the township, and a part was tilled in common. The obtaining of a grant from the General Court by a group of proprietors was not considered to confer actual title to the land described in the grant. It was enacted by the General Court that no person nor corporation could purchase, or accept as a gift, lands from the Indians without first obtaining this grant and afterward arranging a purchase and obtaining a deed from the aboriginal owners. Thus there were two steps necessary to obtain land under the Plymouth system. First a petition must be presented to the General Court, describing the desired land and praying that body to appoint a committee to view it, draw up a proper deed, and grant the right to make the purchase. Secondly, after the grant was allowed, the purchase was made from the Indians. All of the land in the Old Colony, with the exception of the township of Plymouth, which we have seen was given by the sachem Ousamequin, was acquired by this method.

At first glance this procedure would seem to be a just and equitable one, especially when it is compared to the high-handed methods in vogue in some of the other colonies. Indeed those who conceived and used the method sincerely considered it so. A letter written by Mr. Winslow in 1676 clearly expresses his feeling in this regard. He says, "I think I can clearly say that, before these present troubles broke out (Phillip's War) the English did not possess one foot of land in this colony but what was fairly obtained by honest purchase of the Indian proprietors. We made a law that none should purchase or receive as a gift land from the Indians without the knowledge of the Court. And, lest they be straightened, we ordered that Mount Hope, Pocasset, and several other necks of land in the colony, because most suitable and convenient for them, should never be bought out of their hands." There is, however, another possible interpretation of this policy which sought to guarantee certain "most convenient" lands to the Indians forever. By this means the Indians of the Old Colony were to be divided into several groups and confined to several necks of land. Thus the frontiers which the English must defend were short and discontinuous and the Indians would experience difficulty in combining their forces should the need arise.

One aspect of the changing relationship between the Indians of the Old Colony and their white neighbors which we are prone to overlook is that with the growth of white population the English sense of security increased rapidly after 1625.

During the initial period of settlement the fate of Plymouth always hung in the balance. The failure of a crop, the return of the first terrible sickness, or an Indian war could easily spell disaster. Only one hundred and two souls, many of them women and children, had been landed at Plymouth in the winter of 1620. When the Mayflower spread her white sails for the return voyage to England only a pitiful fifty-six remained to watch her fade out of sight in the mists of the mighty Atlantic. Stranded on an inhospitable strip of seashore, three thousand miles from home and with five hundred miles of unknown wilderness between them and their countrymen in Virginia, they felt homeless indeed. Their friendship with the Indians was a precious thing. They appreciated the help that was freely given by the people of Pokonoket. Without their corn for seed and for food they would probably have starved before a crop could have been raised. Without their guidance they could not have survived in this wilderness. It was quite natural that they should consider the Indians as friends and co-subjects of a common King.

The fact that the Plymouth government entered into a treaty with the Wampanoags indicates the status which was accorded to them at that time. This treaty was no empty gesture, its provisions were respected by both parties for many years. The Indians provided the assistance which their new allies sorely needed and the English responded instantly when the Indians needed help in the defense of their country. The original settlers of Plymouth sincerely desired to live in peace and amity with the Indians and made every effort to keep their friendship.

By 1625 the success of the settlement seemed assured. True, they were still burdened by an enormous debt to the merchant adventurers but the time of starvation was past and their strength was slowly but surely increasing. Their problems were now economic and not quite so pressing. The friendship of the Indian was still an asset, he was an important factor in the fur trade and he still had land for sale. Familiarity with the Indian and his way of life had not tended to support the acceptance of him as an equal. The English began to look upon the Indians as subjects rather than as allies.

By 1630 there were some three hundred inhabitants of Plymouth, there was a settlement at the Bay, and there was talk of establishing new townships within the Old Colony. By 1644 there were eight of these new towns and the population of the Old Colony was nearly three thousand. There were settlements in Rhode Island, and the Bay Colony was very substantial. With the expansion of the colony its government had changed radically. Instead of the paternal and almost pure democracy of Carver and Bradford, a representative form of democracy had been instituted. An impersonal General court had been created from which the friendliness and understanding of earlier days had departed. The increase of population and a subtle change in the character of the people had made necessary the enactment of a much larger and more complicated code of law which in some manner had become applicable to Indians as well as to white men. Regardless of the fact that the Indians had their own code and that they had no part in the passage of these English statutes, they were henceforth to be held strictly accountable to the court as a subject people. The difference in culture and in the ethical concepts between the Indian and the Englishman were disregarded and the Indian became liable for acts which to him seemed perfectly normal and reasonable. Even his sachems were haled before the English courts and deemed subject to arrest, trial, and judgment by them. All pretense of equality and justice seemed to have been forgotten, the Indian was no longer needed but had become an hindrance to the march of progress.

There was a law, for example, that prohibited the sale of arms and ammunition to an Indian regardless of the fact that these were now a necessity to one living off the country. Of course, like all laws which would prevent the sale of a desirable commodity this law simply increased the profit which might be made in the trade and did not prevent the traffic in arms. Individual Indians paid large sums for guns, powder, and lead and they were valued possessions. But if an Indian became involved with the courts over some law which he had broken, possibly a law of which he knew nothing, his arms could be taken in lieu of a fine. Sachems were ordered to deliver up all of the arms in the

possession of their people, an almost impossible demand which they could not accomplish.

Eventually the unrest among the Indians became noticeable. They had at last begun to realize that they were on the losing side. It all happened within the span of a lifetime and there were many among the Indians who could remember their former freedom. These old ones could recall the day when the English came seeking their friendship, offering military assistance in exchange for corn. Their stories of former greatness, when all this country was forest, when game was plentiful and there were no white men with their strange laws and fines, were like sharp barbs to the young warriors. They too would be free and independent and live the life of their ancestors. The Indian elder statesmen were cautious, the terrible example of the Pequot War, in which that tribe had been ruthlessly exterminated, was still fresh in their minds. They remembered how the English had cunningly divided and conquered, enticing the Narragansetts and the Wampanoags into an alliance against their own people.

There were other facets to this degenerating relationship also. Aside from the attempt to enforce English law upon the Indians a steady pressure was being applied to make him give up his religious concepts and turn to Christianity. I would not misinterpret the sincere intentions of men like Elliot and Gookin who labored long and tirelessly to convert the Indians. Their intentions were excellent, they actually believed that they were offering the only salvation possible to an ignorant and heathen people. It was just that the Indian could not be expected to understand the attempt as anything but another way of undermining his culture, of weakening his resistance and destroying him. Elliot's converts came largely from isolated Indian groups who succumbed to his preaching through fear of refusal. When the unconverted Indians saw that these praying Indians were being gathered into small villages, being clothed in the garb of white men, being taught to live and pray like Englishmen, they were disturbed. It seemed to them that this was a sort of adoption right by which the English sought to increase their strength while it decreased their own. This, after all, was a common practice among the Indians to increase their effective strength when they had designs upon a neighboring tribe.

The sum total of all these things, the conversion of Indians, the summoning of their sachems to Plymouth, or Taunton, or Boston, to answer charges and pay fines, their diminishing lands, the superiority with which they were treated, must have been maddening indeed to the Indians. As long as the old sachem Ousamequin lived he somehow managed to hold his people in check. The memory of Bradford and Carver and Winslow, his good friends and kind neighbors, his great resolve to keep the treaty of peace he had concluded so long ago when Plymouth was young, remained uppermost in his mind. With the death of Ousamequin in 1662 a decided change took place in the relationship between the Indians and the English.

The coming of the young sachem Wamsutta to power was hailed by the younger element as an opportunity. Now they would have their turn at determining tribal policy and a chance to right the many wrongs that had been done to them. Rumors flew thick and fast, the English had a guilty conscience which generates rumor and causes its ready acceptance as fact. Every visit by Wamsutta to another village was evidence of conspiracy. Customary gatherings for ritual purposes or council became suspect. Eventually the summonses to an English Court to answer for these alleged acts of enmity were issued. Wamsutta obeyed with such reluctance that the English deemed it necessary to send an armed escort to see that he answer their peremptory demand. At his final appearance at Plymouth Wamsutta became suddenly ill and was allowed to leave for home in order that he might resort to the help of his medicine men. Wamsutta was never to see Pokonoket again. He was gathered to his fathers somewhere between Plymouth and home. New fuel had been added to the growing fire of resentment. Wamsutta had been poisoned by the English, or so it was said.

Phillip, the younger brother, became Sachem upon the death of Wamsutta. But thirteen years of unrest, of wrangling, suspicion, accusations, denials, arrests, fines and indignities were to elapse before the final crisis arose.

At this late date it is difficult to follow the conflicting tales of that fateful period of Old Colony history, and it has no part in this brief paper. Indian contributions to the settlement of the Old Colony had long since ceased and their relationship with the English was about to end in disaster. The inevitable consequences of the unequal partnership were upon them, the refusal of the Indian to accept absorption was about to end in his destruction.

Some few Indians chose to remain friendly and survive but as a people and as a factor in the growth and development of New England they no longer existed. They were but a pitiful and degraded remnant of a once powerful and proud people.

THE STONE BOWL INDUSTRY, ITS IMPORTANCE AS A CULTURE DIAGNOSTIC

Given at the 1955 Meeting of the Eastern States Federation of Archaeological Societies

By William S. Fowler

For more than half a century much has been written about ancient soapstone quarrying in various localities on the Atlantic seaboard, east of the Appalachians. From the many quarry sites in New England through those in Pennsylvania and the Potomac River Valley to those in Virginia and Alabama, writers have indicated that operations were similar and have shown illustrations of quarry tools to support their beliefs. However, not until the last fifteen years have smaller and more diversified quarry finishing tools been discovered and reported. Also, until recently the method of tailing removal remained pretty much a mystery, although W. H. Holmes in 1894, when reporting recoveries from Potomac Valley quarries, states that the removal of tailings was no doubt an established practice, but that no stone implements had appeared which could have been used for that purpose. Instead, he speculates that wooden implements may have been employed which have long since disappeared. Today, occurrence of stone spike-like tailing breakers in most quarries I have excavated, and triangular tailing breakers in those of the Connecticut Valley of Massachusetts, together with many stone hand spades at these sites leaves little doubt as to the method used for removal of waste from quarry floors.

This paper is written not so much for the purpose of describing various classes of industrial tools —these have been adequately reported in previous papers—as it is to draw attention to certain similarities between New England quarrying and that carried on further to the south. Also, it is written to emphasize the importance of the age in which quarrying activities flourished, and to suggest that this period be given a respectable niche in the chronological culture pattern of the East. For, if this era lasted as long as it seems, its culture must have been greatly influenced by the industry.

W. H. Holmes says: "The early occupants of the Potomac region" — "attempted to utilize loose masses of the soft and tough stone known to us as steatite or soapstone. The progress toward its extensive utilization was, no doubt, very slow, and unless previous knowledge of such stone had been gained elsewhere, must have continued for centuries." This leads to the conviction that, for any such important economic activity with such a long probable duration, there must have been a culture center which influenced dissemination of techniques as well as styles of tools and products. (In referring to the industry, it seems to me more realistic to use the term "Stone Bowl," rather than, "Soapstone or Steatite Bowl," since vessels were sometimes made of stone materials other than steatite, depending upon their availability at quarry sites. Such other stones as chlorite, serpentine, graphite, and even granite were often used.)

In the fall of 1953 I was invited to participate with a group sponsored by the University Museum of Philadelphia in exploratory work at the Christiania Quarry near Coatesville, Pennsylvania, in Lancaster County. The object of the dig was to locate, if possible, quarry implements which had not been reported formerly, and to study tools and products in general which had been previously recovered. Mr. Carl Hepner willingly made available for inspection his large collection of artifacts from the quarry. In evidence were relatively long picks and chisels, while stone bowls were oval in shape with utilitarian lugs at either end. For the most part, smaller tools and specialized tailing-removal implements were missing. Subsequently, good specimens of some of these were located in a large pile of discards in the Hepner yard. During work at the quarry, progress was made in the recovery of more tools not recognized before from localities south of New England. After assembling

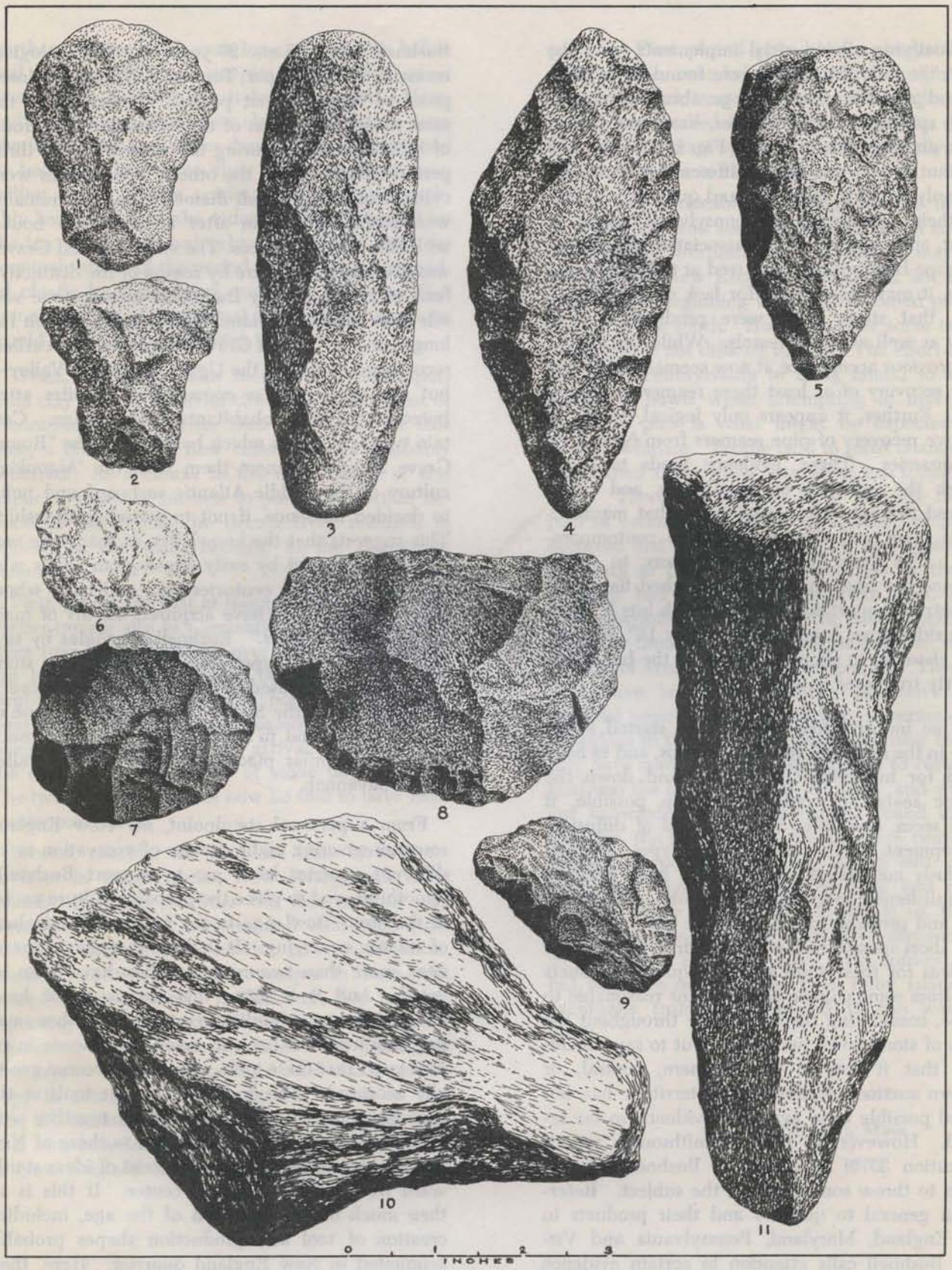


Fig. 26. Pennsylvania Industrial Tools — Christiania Steatite Quarry, (similar to tools in New England quarries): 1,2, Pipe-bowl Reamers; 3, Chisel; 4,5, End Picks; 6, Shaver; 7,8, Abrading Scrapers; 9, Hand Gouge; 11, Spike-like Tailing Breaker; 10, Hand Spade.

and classifying all industrial implements from the quarry, the following types were found to be present: end pick, chisel, hand gouge, abrading scraper, shaver, spike-like tailing-breaker, hand and hafted spades, and pipe-bowl reamer (Fig. 26). Now, it is important to note that these different tools are also commonly found in New England quarries. Therefore, their appearance in Pennsylvania seems of interest, and suggests certain associated hypotheses. Since pipe-bowl reamers occurred at the Christiania quarry, it may be assumed for lack of further evidence, that stone pipes were products of that quarry as well as stone vessels. While this theory lacks previous acceptance, it now seems tenable due to our recovery of at least three reamers at Christiania. Further, it appears only logical, based on extensive recovery of pipe reamers from New England quarries. There, evidence tends to prove through the presence of pipe-blanks and forms scattered through the quarry waste that manufacture of pipes and stone vessels was contemporaneous. The three Christiania reamers, to which reference has been made, are retouched flat spalls of quartz and quartzite 2-3″ long, with bits ¾″ long, whose sides taper from approximately 1¼″ in width at the shoulder to about 1″ at end of the bit, which is nearly truncated in each case.

For an industry like this to have started somewhere in the region of steatite outcrops, and to have spread for hundreds of miles up and down the Atlantic seaboard would have been possible, it would seem, only after a long period of diffusion. Development of the seven chief types of tools previously mentioned, alone, would have been an accomplishment requiring generations of trial and error, and probably could not have been squeezed into a short span of only a few hundred years. That the ideas for these tools and also quarry products came from some culture center seems reasonable to assume, considering their similarity throughout the region of stone bowl quarrying. But to say conclusively that it was in the southern, central, or northern sections of the coastal territory has not seemed possible from available evidence so far reported. However, in 1940 a Smithsonian report, Publication 3578, by David I. Bushnell, Jr., attempts to throw some light on the subject. Referring in general to quarries and their products in New England, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia, Bushnell calls attention to certain evidence of a former day, reported by M. R. Harrington. Bushnell says: "Some 20 years ago archaeological research in the Upper Tennessee Valley disclosed proof of three distinct periods of occupancy, the most recent being that of the Cherokee. The form of burial practiced during the earliest of the three periods differed from the others. The graves were cylindrical and of small diameter, and the remains were forced into them after being closely bound with chin between knees. The name "Round Grave" was given to this culture by reason of the distinctive form of burial. Many fragments of soapstone vessels were found associated with material which belonged to the "Round Grave People" — the earliest recognized culture in the Upper Tennessee Valley— but no soapstone was encountered on sites attributed to the later inhabitants of the region. Certain types of objects which belonged to the "Round Grave People" connect them with the 'Algonkian culture of the middle Atlantic seaboard and point to decided influence, if not to actual relationship.' This suggests that the knowledge of soapstone was carried southward by early Algonquian tribes who entered the region centuries ago, and from whom other groups would have acquired the art of making soapstone vessels." Bushnell concludes by saying: "and if the hypothesis is correct, the stone (soapstone) was used in the North long before it was quarried in the South. Consequently, some of the utensils found in New England may be much older than similar pieces discovered in the valley of the Savannah."

From a personal standpoint, my New England research covering eight seasons of excavation in six different quarries leads me to support Bushnell's hypothesis, and to place the probable culture center of the Stone Bowl Age in the northern hemisphere of steatite quarrying. It is there that many quarry sites, more than twenty in number, have been located. And it is there that frequency of hand gouges, shavers, abrading-scrapers, and other small finishing tools has been so much in evidence in recent years that these tools, now, have become generally accepted. The finding of similar tools at the Christiania quarry to a lesser extent together with tailing removal implements similar to those of New England seems to suggest movement of ideas southward from a New England center. If this is so, then much of the invention of the age, including creation of tool and production shapes probably originated in New England quarries. Here, then, was a full blown industrial development with a

northern center which must have affected the habits and customs of all those peoples with whom it came in contact. Nothing like it had happened before, and for many years after its close, stone bowls were cherished, repaired when damaged, and continued to be used as long as they could be kept from falling apart. While spiritual development probably kept pace with the industrial, as evidenced by the frequent use of red ochre with burial rites, the economic status of the period must have been molded chiefly by stone bowl quarrying; other artifact manufacturing, a traditional necessity in any age, would have been incidental to it.

When, at last, the new method of making pots from clay arrived, quarries closed down for want of a continuing demand for their products. At that time, a change to a new culture center probably occurred. As a climax to the main theme of this paper, it seems of interest to point out certain deductions which may be drawn from research in regions to the south relating to the change to ceramics.

First, let me say that at Ragged Mountain, a rock shelter-quarry site in Connecticut where potsherds were found superimposed over the steatite quarrying horizon, it was proved beyond a reasonable doubt that the use of clay pots occurred after quarrying operations had ceased. Therefore, it seems safe to postulate the arrival of ceramics at the close of a long period of stone bowl making. The two industries cannot now be said to have been contemporaneous.

Second, consider the evidence from ceramic recoveries in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Long Island. In these localities the first pots of clay were made with flat bottoms and with lugs, quite similar in shape to stone bowls. In some instances, crushed steatite was used for temper in these pots, except on Long Island. In that area, Roy Latham, reporting in the Pennsylvania Archaeologist of December 1953 about recoveries at a Jamesport site, says: "Here the one clay vessel was a precise copy in ceramic of the soapstone vessels in that site; a low elongated form with a lug on each end. It is not, however, soapstone-tempered." Nowhere in New England has any such early clay pot appeared. First period pots, there, always have a pointed base, rounded rim, nearly a straight neck, coarse mineral tempered paste with coiling indicated, cord-marked inside and out, and no decoration. Similar ware appears, stratigraphically, above flat based styles to the southwest.

It is this noticeable ceramic difference between New England and southern regions which seems to be awaiting interpretation. At first, it may seem strange that New England potters did not experiment in the beginning with flat bottomed pots like potters to the south. However, after some thought the reason is not difficult to find. The effort of potters from Pennsylvania to Long Island to imitate soapstone bowls when attempting to make their first clay pots is what might be expected from human behavior. People tend to resist change from established traits when new ideas are thrust upon them. Therefore, it seems likely that the first impact of ceramics on stone bowl industrial customs occurred first in southern regions, and persisted as far north as Long Island. However, by the time diffusion had reached this northern area, people were discontinuing some of the first experiments, which by then had been found undesirable, such as the use of crushed steatite for temper. They may even have begun to reconcile themselves to a conoidal vessel shape, the traditional ceramic style of regions to the west from which the new industry may have spread. From Long Island to New England was the last step in the diffusion; and when at last knowledge of pottery making found its way into this, the former stone bowl culture center, the period of experimentation had ended with potters ready and eager to accept the tried and proven conoidal shape as the best. If this is so, then, it seems probable with the coming of ceramics that New England no longer gave forth cultural ideas, but began to receive them from Long Island, and eventually from the mainland to the west and south.

Bronson Museum

Attleboro, Mass.

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